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SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: PRIME MINISTER SHAYKH  
SABAH AL-AHMED AL-SABAH'S VISIT TO THE U.S.

1. Summary: The exhaustively covered and widely hailed visit of Kuwaiti Prime Minister Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Washington DC sparked many columnists to examine the state of Kuwait-U.S. relations. While some commentators noted recent bilateral points of contention, such as trafficking in persons, intellectual property rights protection, and student visa issuance, the overall verdict was that the state of the bilateral relationship is strong. Columnist Dr. Zuhair Al-Abbad, advisor to the Ministry of Information, wrote in Al-Seyassah, "The Kuwait-U.S. relations are distinguished, old and robust." End Summary.

2. Writing in pro-government daily Al-Anba July 4, Sami Al-Nesf, media advisor to the prime minister, wrote: "The friendly atmosphere and the warm welcome that Kuwait's Prime Minister received from President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary Rice, members of the U.S. Congress, and other dignitaries was an indication of the strong ties that link Kuwait to the United States.

The friendly and warm welcome of Kuwait's delegation by the U.S. Secretary of State Dr. Rice was obvious. She thanked Kuwait and the Kuwaiti government for their courageous stances in support of international decisions. She also congratulated Kuwaiti women on their recent political achievement. Secretary Rice noted that Kuwait has a long tradition of democracy and she applauded Kuwait's journey towards reform and full democracy.

In regards to domestic laborers and intellectual property rights, Kuwait explained its official commitment to achieve positive changes on these fronts. It was also noted that these issue are not exclusive to Kuwait, but rather they are common problems that exist in every country.

3. Writing in Al-Anba on July 4, Walid Awaid wrote: "We were very pleased to hear what the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar, said after his meeting with Kuwait's P.M. Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed regarding the difficulties that face our Kuwaiti students to get visas to the U.S. The promises were encouraging, and we remain optimistic that further efforts would be exerted to relax the process, and make visas to Kuwaiti students more attainable.

Nobody can deny the U.S. the right to defend its borders against possible aggressors. All we are saying is that security measures must be effective while at the same time they must not be a burden to those who want to go to the U.S. for all the right reasons."

4. Writing in pro-government daily Al-Seyassah on July 4, Dr. Zuhair Al-Abbad, advisor to the Ministry of Information, wrote: "The Kuwait-U.S. relations are distinguished, old and robust. Such relations date back to the reign of the former Amir of Kuwait, the late Shaykh Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. This means the relations between the two countries began even prior to the oil era, Kuwait's independence, and prior to Kuwait's representation in the UN. During the reign of all of the Amirs of Kuwait, including Shaykh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Kuwaiti-U.S. relations improved and this can be perceived through a firm stance adopted by the U.S. while dealing with the notorious Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait by the defunct regime of Saddam Hussein."

5. Writing in independent daily Al-Rai Al-Aam on July 4, Chancellor of the American University of Kuwait Dr. Shafiq Al-Ghabra wrote: "The Kuwaiti Prime Minister's visit to Washington comes in the context of a long history of bilateral relations between the two countries. The pact concluded in 1991 between Kuwait and the United States following the liberation of Kuwait represented a turning point in Kuwait's relations with the U.S.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's decision to support the U.S. in its efforts to oust Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003 injected a new life in the relations between the two countries, given the fact that during the Anglo-U.S. war on Iraq, Kuwait allowed its territories to be used as a launch pad during the war. This happened when some countries in the region such as Turkey refused to allow the U.S. to use its space

and Kuwait's decision to fill that role resulted in the U.S. considering Kuwait a strategic non-NATO ally.

16. Writing in Al-Watan on July 6, Abdullah Al-Shayji wrote: "The warm welcome of Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed by President Bush and members of the U.S. administration, including members of the U.S. Congress, has strengthened the solid and core strategic and geopolitical partnership between the US and Kuwait . Kuwait is a special case of strategic alliance for the U.S. As former Secretary Powell put it, 'The relationship with Kuwait is indispensable.' This visit has great implications, and I will write more on the subject in future articles."

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